

FTI | FAA TELECOMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE

Telecommunications... in the world of aviation it is probably not something that you actually think about. It's a *transparent* service to most users.

But, have you ever thought of how vital telecommunications are to the everyday operations and basic needs of the National Airspace System?

In fact, telecommunications are the lifeline of Air Traffic Control (ATC) Services!

FTI *will strive to take full advantage of proven technological advances while significantly improving our overall business practices to more efficiently obtain, operate and manage our telecommunications services.*

All of this translates into change; an incremental managed change, over the next decade, but nonetheless, change. This is an exciting and challenging time in FAA telecommunications, especially for a transparent service! We encourage your feedback and participation as we move forward to a new era in communicating.

What
is FTI all about?



The FTI strategic vision is to achieve an integrated suite of *products, services* and *business practices*

that better meet the telecommunications needs of the National Airspace System (NAS) in the 21st century

The FTI program will introduce managed change in both network services and business processes. FTI will acquire a wide range of contractor provided Service Delivery Point (SDP) to SDP telecommunications services, hosted on a common physical infrastructure with an integrated network management system. Over the next decade, FTI will incrementally replace systems that currently comprise FAA's operational and mission support networks. In a nutshell, that is what FTI is all about - providing the needed high quality telecommunication services to support expanding ATC operations while constraining cost growth.

The FAA's existing and future telecommunications requirements are continuing on a growth trend of over 12.5% annually. This demand for both mission support and operational services will need to rely on a more robust telecommunications network to deliver a highly reliable, higher quality and more diverse services, affording an easy and common access to a host of aviation users in a wide variety of voice, video and data services. Naturally, the cost of providing these services must be tightly managed and contained if they are to be afforded within the projected cost of ATC operations for the foreseeable future.

The FTI Contract

While some activities within FTI are in their early planning stages, others, especially in the acquisition arena are rapidly moving forward. This is especially true of the FTI contract award. We are actively into the evaluation period and a contract award is currently scheduled for Fall, 2001.

The FTI contract will be a performance based services contract consisting of a 5 year base with options that could extend the period of performance to a total of 15 years. Our FTI acquisition philosophy and management principles are designed to employ several innovative approaches to best achieve our program goals.

Highlights of these approaches are:

- Employment of Performance Based Principles
- FAA Contract Management
- Price Management Mechanism
- Competitive Pricing

Want more info

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What

makes FAA believe that FTI is a better approach?

FAA has historically expanded telecommunications incrementally to meet ATC needs as they have grown. This has led to an overly complex integration of telecommunications networks and sub-networks many of which are independent. Continuing to rely on this strategy as we move to the future is both inefficient and costly. In fact, studies show that continuing with this strategy will drive telecommunications costs to the point where they will become the largest single operational cost element (next to salaries) for future ATC operations! To avoid this unacceptable consequence, FAA must change its telecommunications management approach and make increasing use of commercially available leased services optimized for both service and cost.

In short, the combination of ever increasing demand for additional services, the exponential forecasted telecommunications traffic growth and the dramatic advances in the telecommunications industry afford us the opportunity to significantly improve the way we do business today.

Will

this new FTI program compromise our current level of service?

No, in fact the opposite is true. FTI will continue to offer equivalent services to those offered today. The redundant and diverse path services required to support critical NAS operations will continue to be offered. A broader portfolio of new services will be offered, with high availability to support emerging NAS requirements. Additionally, a market basket of security features associated with FTI are outlined in the security section of the functional areas on our website.

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How

will FTI affect me?

FTI will involve change, thus it will affect our users and our customers. Be assured, that all FTI changes will be *incrementally* implemented over an *extended* period of time and are being well planned and coordinated.

As a user of FTI services, there are a few areas in which you will most likely be impacted. One area is the provisioning of telecommunications services (e.g., requirements and network engineering, service ordering, and implementation). Another area is pre-planning for new and emerging NAS programs (new FTI technology will most likely enhance your programs efficiency). And then of course, there is your budget.

What

We intend to track recurring user costs and assemble historical data to “set the stage” for direct billing approaches. This is what is more commonly known as “Fee-for-Service”. It will not be possible in all cases since many of the current functions are general in nature and do not have separate, identifiable funding. However, this is possible in many cases, particularly for new and emerging programs. We anticipate increasing user awareness and achieving better accountability of telecommunications costs, while ultimately instilling in users a financial incentive to control demand and costs. Over time, more consideration for telecommunications requirements and costs will factor into future systems design and implementation.

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current telecommunications systems will transition to FTI?

Most of the detailed planning is vendor specific. In the meantime, we can tell you that the systems to be transitioned to FTI include ADTN, BWM, RCL/LDRCL, LINC, NADIN II, and DMN, over the period of the next six to seven years! This will be an incremental, planned and managed approach. We are identifying staffing impacts, defining and implementing training needs, handbooks and orders, and striving to maintain an understanding of the impact on ALL facilities. We are also obtaining input and participation from personnel representatives and bargaining units. Throughout this process we will continue to develop and distribute detailed program documentation.



Visit our web site

faa.gov/programs/fti

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